

NORTH VIETNAM AND LAOS

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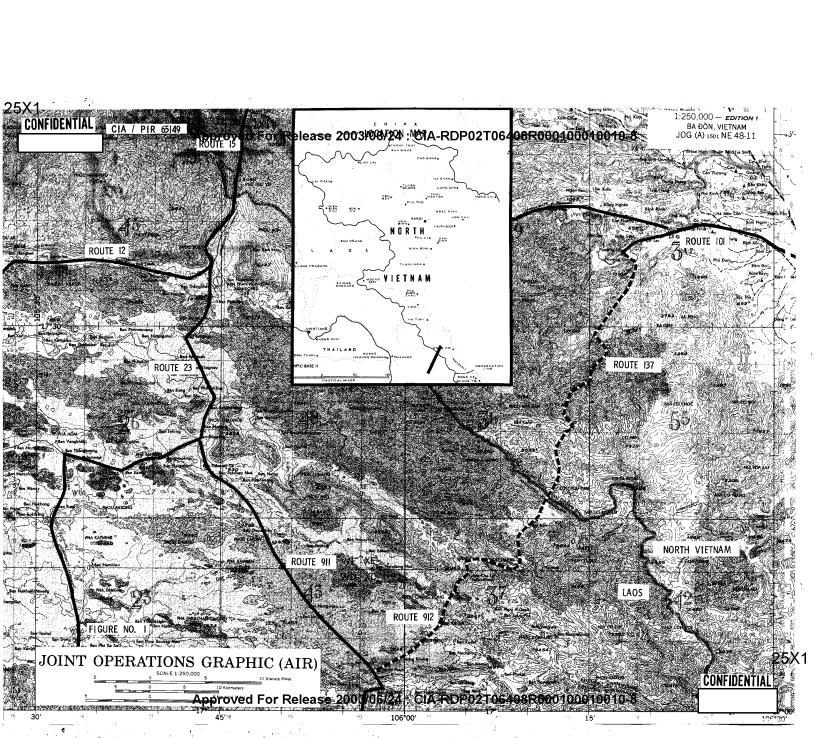
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ROUTE 137/912 NORTH VIETNAM AND LAOS



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GENERAL

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Route 137/912 is a newly constructed road running from Phong Mns, North Vietnem (UTM XE 373458) to Ben Loum Poum, Laos (UTM XD 018853). The road is designated Route 137 within North Vietnem and Route 912 in Laos (Figure 1).

Route 137/912 is the second motorable link between North Vietnam and the Lactian "Panhandle". Its strategic importance stems from the fact that the PANW (Peoples' Army of North Vietnam) may now elect to partially or totelly by-pass the Ms Gis Pass (North Vietnamese Route 15 and Lactian Routes 12 and 23) which has been under frequent attack during the past 2 years, and utilize Route 137/912 as a major avenue into the "Panhandle".

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The alignment of Route 137/912 and detailed photo enlargements are provided on Figures 2 through 8. Figures 9 through 11 show representative samples of termin profiles along the route prior to construction, and Figures 12 and 13 give soil characteristics.

Route 137/912 is a single lane road, approximately 10' wide, and 79.5 nm in length. Its surface is partially prepared, probably with gravel and corduroying. The identification of such construction materials and the extent of their use was difficult to make on available photographic the extensive tree and trellis cover, lack of sufficient photographic resolution, and the photographic tonal similarity between unprepared earth and the construction materials involved. Constructed or modified rock fill fords were utilized at two streem crossings. No bridges were identified although several stream crossings were obscured by tree canopy (Figures 5 and 6)

The northeastern end of Route 137/912 connects with North Vietnamese Route 101, and the Song Troc (River). From this point, Route 137/912 extends southwestward along portions of two consecutive stream valleys thus avoiding the steep kents 10pes within the ares (Figures 3 and 9, Profile 1). The road follows a particularly narrow valley floor within this segment at UTM XE 347460. The road is particularly vulnerable at this point due to: (1) the potential landslide hazard caused by the valleys steeply sloping sides, (2) the lock of an easy alternate route around the valley, and (3) the ease of locating the potential target from the air. It is of interest to note that the PAVM have constructed 3 light AAA sites and a group of AW positions within this area (Figures 2 and 3).

Further to the southwest, Route 137/912 starts to climb into the highlands reaching the crest of the highest ridge at UTM XE 299304, (Figure 9, Profile 2). The road continues to the southwest snaking its way through the high karst topography (Figures 5, 6, 9, and 10, Profiles 3 and 4) until reaching the Leos/North Vietnam border area.

Within North Vietnam, the road has been constructed almost totally within kerst topography. This type of topography has excellent surface drainage conditions, but has imposed intermittent steep slopes along the route (Figure 12). It is quite probable that this segment of Route 137/912 has an all-weather capability with a minimum of maintenance.

As the route continues to the southwest into Leos, the topography changes from the dissected terrain characteristic of karst topography into a smoother upland plain broken by long NW/SE ridges of sandstone and isolated kerst bodies. The road crosses a major combination causeway and ford on the Nam Ta Le (Stream) at UTM XE 230022 (Figure 6) and proceeds up a major slope cresting at UTM XE 232013. This critical road segment has been cemouflaged by man-made trelliese (Figures 6 and 10, Profile 5). Early photography revealed a by-pass road under construction for this critical road segment. As the road continues towerd its junction with Route 911 at Ban Loum Poum, it swings around the ridges of sandstone and karst bodies maintaining a relatively level grade with few slopes (Figures 7, 8, and 11, Profile 7). The Laction segment of Route 137/912 runs through a high plain also affording excellent surface drainage. With proper maintenance during the wet season, i.e. corduroying and surfacing and filling in depressions with gravel, this road segment will probably have an all-weather capability (Figure 13).

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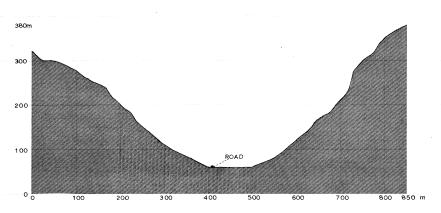
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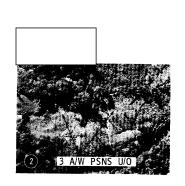
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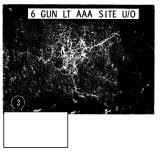


SCALE 1:4572 NO VERTICAL EXAGGERATION



FIGURE NO. 2

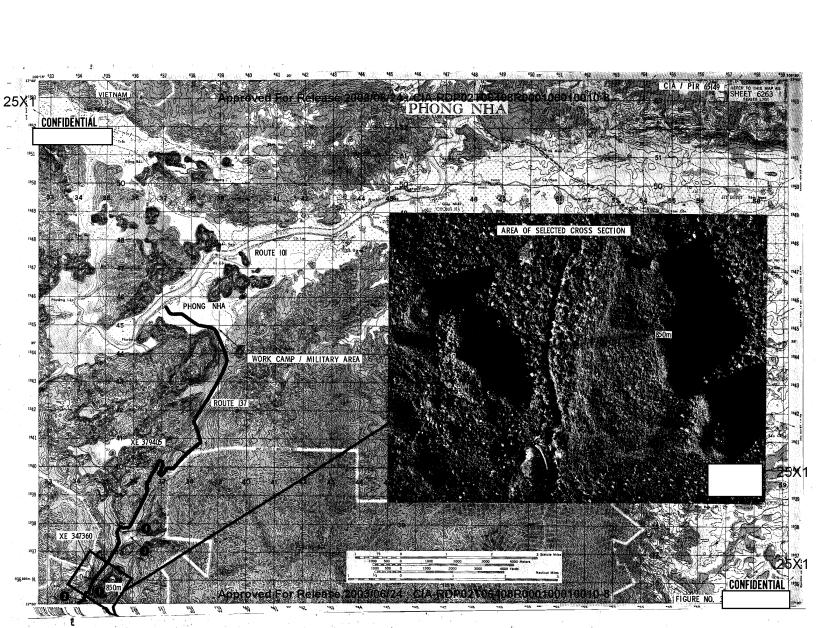


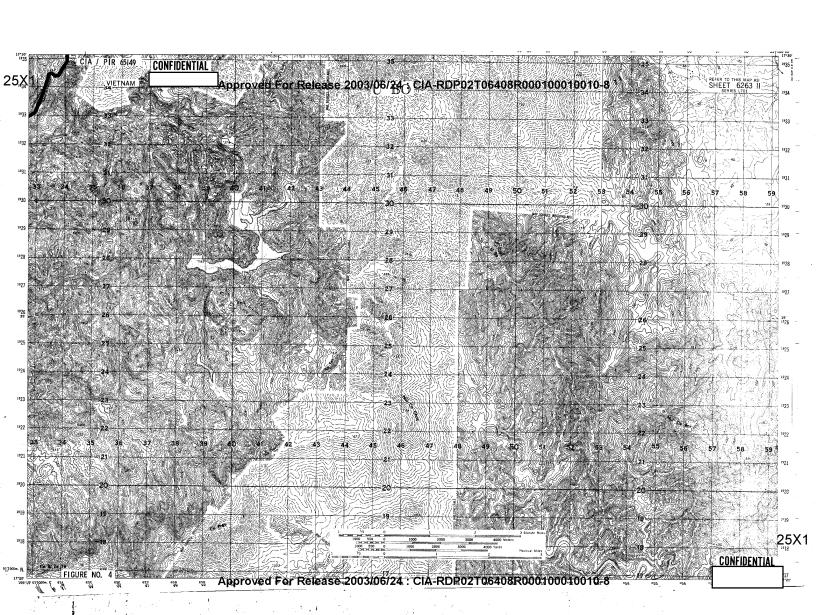


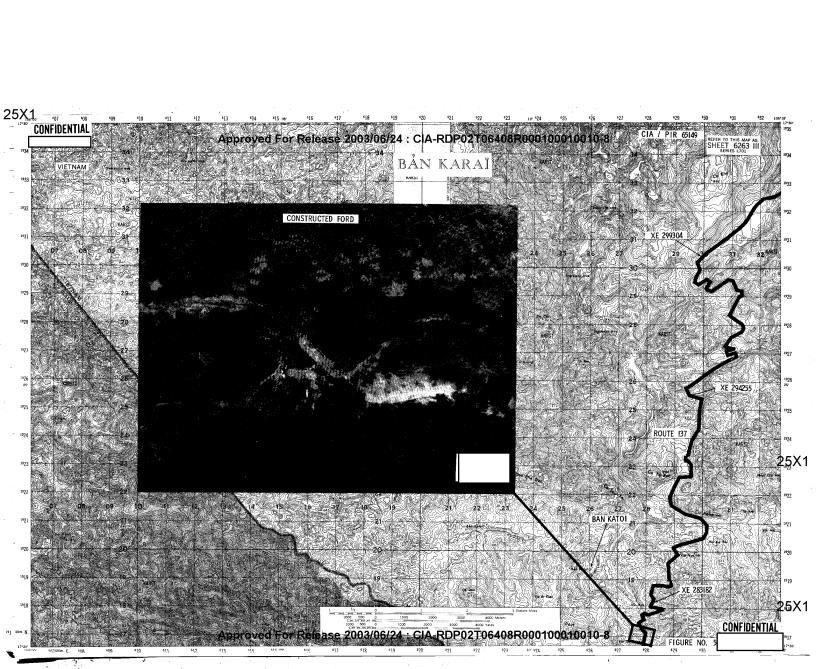


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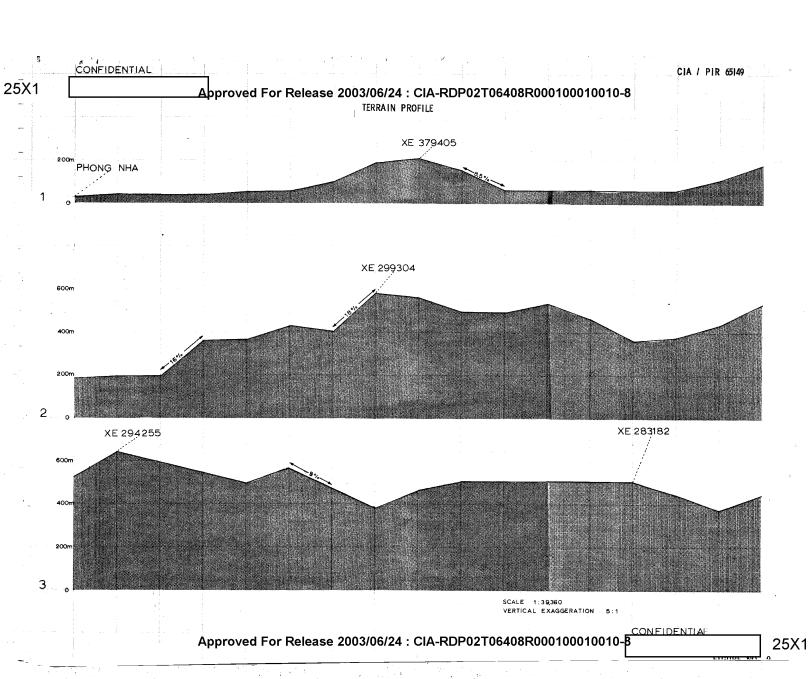


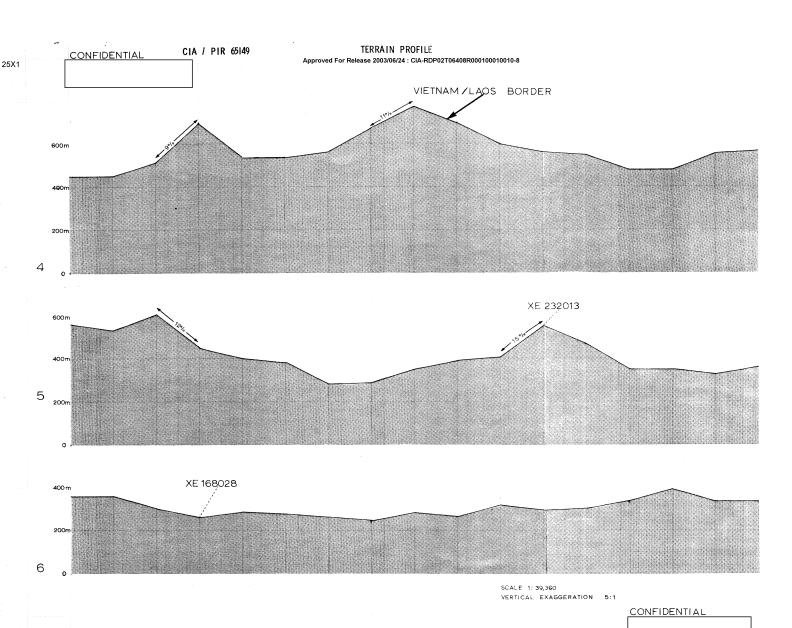


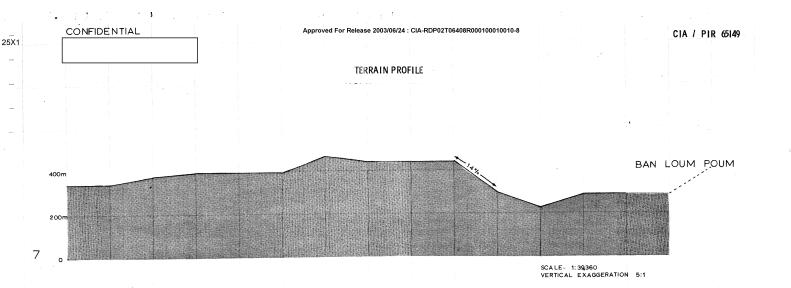
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SOIL TYPES

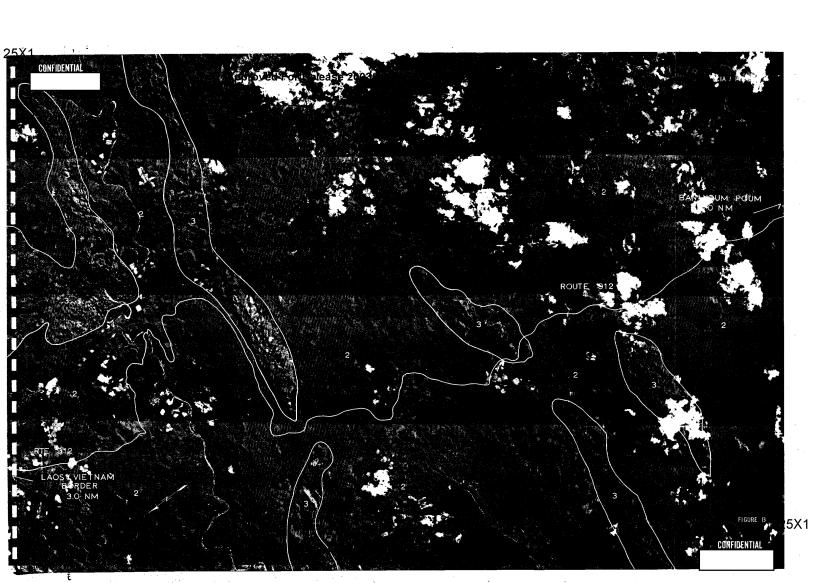
Type I. Stoney, sandy loam and clay, locally bouldery. The area is predominately steeply sloping and mountainous with high rock crags; generally rough terrain. Before construction treatment the soil's cohesion value in dry state is low, its foundation value is good to excellent, its expansion and shrinkage with wetting and drying is low, its permeability is medium, and its surface drainage is excellent.

Type 2. Sandy loam, locally stoney. The area is predominately hilly to mountainous country in which bold steep cliffs interrupt moderate to steep slopes. Before construction treatment, the soil's cohesion value in dry state is low, its foundation value is medium to good, its expansion and shrinkage with wetting and drying is low, its permeability high, and surface drainage is excellent.

Type 3. Clay loam (friable type). The area is predominately a limestone plateau (karst) characterized by subsurface drainage and steep slopes. Before construction treatment the soil's cohesion value in dry state is medium, its foundation value is medium, its expansion and shrinkage with wetting and drying is medium to low, its permeability is medium to high, and its surface drainage is generally good.

Reference: Strategic Engineering Study, No. 78 French Indochina, Section I of Volume I
Terrain Intelligence, prepared by Army Corps Engineers, December, 1943.

FIGURE NO. 12



CIA/PIR 65149 CONFIDENTIAL Approved For Release 2003/06/24 : CIA-RDP02T06408R000100010010-8 MAPS AND CHARTS JOG (A) Series 1501, NE 48-11, Badon, Vietnam, Scale 1:250,000, 1st Edition, 1965 (UNCLASSIFIED) AMS Series L701, 6263-1, Fhong Nha, Scale 1:50,000, 1st Edition, September 1962 (UNCLASSIFIED) AMS Series L701, 6263--11, U-BO, Scale 1>50,000, 1st Edition, April 1963 (UNCLASSIFIED) AME Scries L701, 6263-111, Ben Kerei, Scele 1:50,000, 1st Edition, 1963 (UNCLASSIFIED) AMS Series L7012, 6262-IV Ban San, Scale 1:50,000, 1st Edition, August 1963 (UNCIASSIFTED) AMS Series L7012, 6262-111, Ban Veng Ala, Scale 1:50,000, lst Edition, June 1963 (UNCLASSIFIED) AMS Series LY012, 6162-11, Ban Phaphilang, Scale 1:50,000, lst Edition, June 1963 (UNCLASSIFIED) Arte Geologique, Feuille No. 8E, Vinh Est 1:500,000 (UNCLASSIFIED) CIA. North Vietnem Soils Map 22477 (CONFIDENTIAL) DOCUMENTS Strutegic Engineering Study, No. 78, French Indochine, Section 1 of Vol. 1, Terrain Intelligence, prepared by Army Corps of Engineers, December 1943 (UNCLASSIFIED) C-RR5-82,668 C-RR6-83,377 CIA/IAD PROJECTS 30798-5 30859-6

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